

Update

Winter 2014

Parent-Teen Program Revitalized

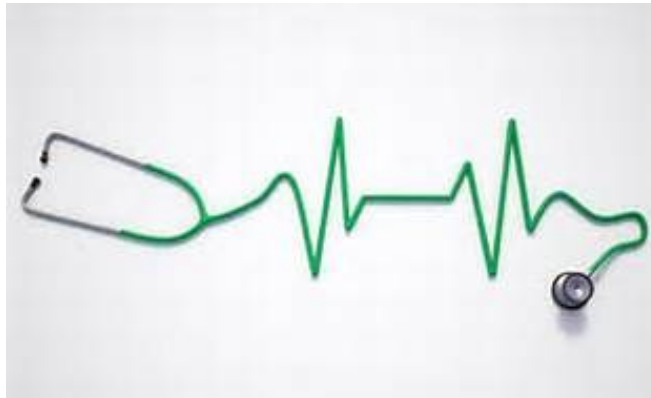
By Andrew Kidde

I love that part of the action movie where the hero blinks his eyes awake to find himself in a hospital bed, hooked up to drips and monitors... Instantly remembering that the world is in peril, only he can save it, and there

are mere seconds within which to act, he sits up, rips out the IV, and starts off. The nurse tries to stop him, "you need to rest," but he shoves her aside and strides out of the room, out of the hospital to save the day. In the audience you sit up taller, your eyes sparkle and you feel energy all the way out to your fingers and toes!

There is something about witnessing life force returning that is galvanizing, and when that return is guided by a mission to do the right thing, to save the innocent, to serve justice and truth! ... we are breathless, transported.

Here at the Mediation program we have had the pleasure of watching the parent teen mediation program being revitalized by two inspired volunteers: Pam Orbach and Galit Arad-Trutner. Because of their energetic outreach, infectious enthusiasm, and diligent hard work, we're getting a flood of referrals, revamping our process-



es, reconnecting with volunteers, planning new trainings, and generally seeing this program come back to life.

Parent teen mediation had been on life support -- vital signs were lethargic. We'd been getting only a few

cases a year, and Cheryl and I had reached the point of wondering whether it was time to pull the plug.

But we're so glad we didn't. Pam and Galit have vision, ambition, and energy. They see what mediation can bring to families with teens. They understand the importance for these families of offering a safe place for thoughtfully guided discussions. They believe in the teen and adult volunteers who have signed up for this work. They believe in themselves as leaders.

I am thrilled. Parent-Teen mediation has not been my baby, and I have been diverted by many other projects, but I have been feeling a sense of loss as I watched the program atrophy. I know how helpful this service can be. The best way to show this is to pull out some of the client testimonial from back in the day when the program was going strong:

“The most helpful part of the mediation process was helping me understand my parents better, and helping me see a better part of me.”

- Teen

“(Mediation gave me an) opportunity to voice my concerns in a safe environment and to feel heard and acknowledged.”

- Parent

“In mediation I got to see my child open up and freely discuss honestly the things that bothered her.”

-Parent

“I was able to speak my mind without any grudges being held.”

– Teen

“Thank you so much! I truly feel this program has helped our family keep it together.”

-Parent

“I got to be more comfortable around my Dad.”

-Teen

We are so happy to see the parent teen mediation program returning to life. The Bellevue community owes a debt of gratitude to Pam Orbach and Galit Arad-Trutner for their excellent work.

Happily Ever After

By Natalie Daniels

With conciliation and mediation work, most of what we do happens mid-story. We listen with empathy to the tale of how everything went wrong. We brainstorm and coach and cajole and try to empower parties to become their own problem solvers. We hope that we have helped create a map to guide the parties out of conflict. But we don't always get to hear the end of the story. We don't always have proof that our work has helped to make a difference.

This is why we are so delighted to be able to share the following vignettes from some of our greatest success stories of 2013, in our clients' own words.

From our Neighborhood Program:

The mediation gave me, my wife and my new neighbor the opportunity to meet at neutral meeting room at City Hall. This was important as it made our neighbor feel safe. Our new neighbor had never met us and was feeling very threatened by the symbolic vandalism of a cherry tree in her front yard that she suspected we were guilty of....

[Telling our stories] allowed us to step into one another shoes for a brief moment and allowed us to see the situation through their eyes. There were huge parts of the story that had been missing for weeks. Without this knowledge each of us would

have continued to assume large bits of information that simply were wrong or misinterpreted. As a result the rest of the mediation was just walking through a resolution like friendly neighbors. We started very upset, but actually left with each other after exchanging emails and phone numbers. Today we are good friends. We share sugar when needed and help watch each others houses when gone. I don't think we would have this amazing neighborly relationship if it weren't for the City of Bellevue Mediation team. Thank you!

-Nathanael

From our Neighborhood Program:

We would like to thank those involved in Bellevue's mediation program for their assistance in resolving the issue with construction of a fence The fence was recently constructed to everybody's satisfaction. The time, patience, and professionalism of Arleen, Peter, Natalie, and Sasha is much appreciated.

-Carol

From our Parent-Teen Program:

Thank you for your help. After the mediation things were better and we were able to do things together like shopping and going out to eat.

-Gina

Parent—Teen Update

By Galit Arad-Trutner and Pam Orbach



It has been an exciting, extremely busy first half of the year for the Parent Teen Mediation program. The phones have been buzzing with inquiries for mediation support, and the team has worked hard to support families across the city. Kudos to the adults and teens who have taken on monthly trainings to increase their communication and mediation skills. One homeless teen had dropped out of school, but was able to return to the family after mediation. Another family was able to overcome total silence and conflict, and shift to understanding and a new set of ground rules at home that suited everyone. One mediation team has worked with school counselors and teachers to turn around the academic and social life of a very distressed teen. In the words of one of our teen mediators, Otto, "It's amazing what can happen when you remind people to think about each other instead of being right."

There has been an expansion of outreach into Bellevue schools, and communication workshops are currently being designed and will for the first time be run for students during the school day. Our family communication workshops are also being scheduled in the evenings at some schools in the district. It is wonderful to watch the program grow.

Recruitment of Adults and Teens for the upcoming full 40-hour free mediation training has begun. If you would enjoy learning mediation skills, compassionate methods of communicating, and would like to volunteer in the Parent Teen program please contact the Bellevue City mediation office and request an application form. The training will be offered by the city at Bellevue City Hall, the third week in June 2014. Now is a great time to get involved.

BNMP Training Opportunities For Mediators and Conciliators

2014 Basic Mediation Training:

Wed. Mar. 12 5:00 p.m. — 9:00 p.m.
Fri. Mar. 14 9:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m.
Sat. Mar. 15 9:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m.
Wed. Mar. 19 5:00 p.m. — 9:00 p.m.
Fri. Mar. 21 9:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m.
Sat. Mar. 22 9:00 a.m. — 5:00 p.m.
Attendance at all sessions is required.

Wednesdays and Fridays:
Bellevue City Hall

Saturdays:
Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center

Conflict Coaching: A Three-Day Basic Training

Apr. 9-11, 2014: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. each day

In Room 1E-112

RSVP by email: ramadei@aol.com or call 303-604-1960

Parent-Teen Training 2014

June 23-27, 2014: 8:30 a.m.-4:30p.m. each day

In Room 1E-120

Workshops:

Mock Mediation Workshop
January 22, 2014: 3-5p.m. in room 1E-118

Parent-Teen In-Service Trainings:

Communication Workshop Training
Jan. 29, 2014: 6-8p.m. in room 1E-118

RSVP by email: mediation_info@bellevuewa.gov or call 425-452-4091

Program Staff:

Program Co-Manager:	Cheryl Cohen	-	452-5222
Program Co-Manager:	Andrew Kidde	-	452-5288
Program Assistant	Natalie Daniels	-	452-2897
Foreclosure Case Manager	Julia Devin	-	452-4118

City of Bellevue website: <http://www.bellevuewa.gov>
(Look for the Mediation Program under "Neighborhood Information")

Conciliation and Conflict Coaching Class: Fall 2013



Pictured left to right: Alex VonNaumann, Tamia Pervez, Lily Young, Feng Chou, Mari Shibuya, Zhanna Kachurina, Aaron Capin, Sandra Young, Russ Westmark, Bre Goss, Jyoti Khera, Lynne Feiges, John Voorhis

BELLEVUE **NEIGHBORHOOD MEDIATION PROGRAM**

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